

The HISTORICAL BULLETIN

A Catholic Quarterly for Teachers and Students of History



VOL. XVI

JANUARY, 1938

No. 2

Communal Movement vs. Feudalism

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A Disillusioned Liberal

Paul R. Conroy

Canisius College

AN ENTHUSIASTIC advocate of democracy during two decades, Comte Alexis de Tocqueville was bitterly disillusioned by his experiences in the revolution of 1848 in France. In 1835 he had written:

The gradual development of the equality of conditions is therefore a providential fact, and it possesses all the characteristics of a divine decree: it is universal, it is durable, it constantly eludes all human interference, and all events as well as all men contribute to its progress. Would it, then, be wise to imagine that a social impulse which dates so far back can be checked by the efforts of a generation? Is it credible that the democracy which has annihilated the feudal system and vanquished kings will respect the citizen and the capitalist? Will it stop now that it has grown so strong and its adversaries so weak?¹

To Tocqueville, then, in 1835 democracy was in its heaven and all was well with the world. But, in 1850, he has another story to tell:

The republican form of government is not the best suited to the needs of France . . . "government without stability always promises more but gives less liberty than a Constitutional Monarchy."²

In this fifteen year period, Tocqueville had observed the development of "the equality of conditions" until the bourgeois monarchy fell in 1848 before the Paris mob, and capitalists indeed found it difficult to check the advancing trend toward equality. Bitter experience in 1848 and 1849 changed him from enthusiast to critic. Toward the close of his career he concludes that security and liberty are incompatible with absolute equality. A brief study of Tocqueville's earlier ideas as expounded in his

¹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, I, 6. (Translated by Henry Reeve) Revised Edition. New York and London. 1900. This appears to be the most recent edition in English of this work.

² Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Recollections of Alexis de Tocqueville*, IX. (English translation by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos) New York, 1896. Henceforth referred to as *Recollections*.

Democracy in America, contrasted with his later concepts given in his *Recollections* will afford us a glimpse of the metamorphosis of a liberal.

Comte Alexis de Tocqueville was born at Verneuil in 1805. He was very young when his father was made a member of the nobility by Louis XVIII. Like many political thinkers of the nineteenth century, Tocqueville never found himself in difficult economic circumstances, but was always a man of wealth and position. In 1831 he was sent to America with de Beaumont to study the penal system there. He published his findings in a treatise in 1835.

In 1839 de Tocqueville published his *De la Democratie en Amerique*, a work which made him famous in France and in the United States. This treatise went through many editions, and was quickly translated into English. It is the summation of Tocqueville's political thought in 1839.³

The same year he was elected to the French Chamber of Deputies from the *arrondissement* of Valognes in Normandy, the location of his ancestral estate. He held office continuously until he retired from public life in 1850. He took part in a short lived ministry which was formed June 2, 1849.⁴ As minister of foreign affairs in this cabinet, he attempted to steer a middle course of moderate republicanism between the alternate extremes

³ *Recollections*, Preface, v and vi, briefly summarizes de Tocqueville's life. Cf. also de Tocqueville, *Memoir, Letters, and Remains*, 2 Volumes, Boston 1862. Cf. Emile Faguet, *Politicians and Moralists of the Nineteenth Century*, 73-109, London, 1928. (English translation by Dorothy Galton), for a brilliant and stimulating discussion of de Tocqueville's political and social philosophy.

⁴ *Recollections*, Part III, 263-379 gives de Tocqueville's account of his experiences in this ministry.

of dictatorship and proletarian revolution. The ministry collapsed, and Tocqueville retired to write his *Recollections*, in which he gives his version of the 1848 revolution. In this work he records his political ideas acquired after years of experience in the democratic area of the Chamber. In contrast to the enthusiasm for democracy voiced in 1839, disillusionment is the dominant note in 1850. For the remainder of his life, Tocqueville devoted himself to the task of writing the history of institutions, a work he had begun in his *Democracy in America*. His more important works include a history of the French Revolution and a history of the reign of Louis XV. He died in 1859.⁵

In *Democracy in America* Tocqueville contends that republican democracy is a superior form of government. In America where the principle of "sovereignty of the people holds sway"⁶ peace and prosperity have been maintained while Europe has been torn by war and revolution. In his observations of the 1830's the Comte did not see the American Civil War coming, nor did he observe that the physical separation of the United States from other powerful nations helped to keep the peace in America, nor did he note that a democratic state could have an imperial appetite that makes one gasp. The United States had attempted to conquer Canada in 1812, and shortly would seize the southwest from a democratic neighbor, Mexico. Democracy proved to be no guarantee against war. One of Tocqueville's greatest faults was his tendency to ascribe all political and social goods he found present in the United States to the existence of democracy.⁷

Examining American life a century ago, Tocqueville discovered a general equality of condition among the people. This moved him to a rhapsody on democracy as an irresistible evolution of history. Privilege was first attacked by the Church, then by the bourgeoisie, but the masses were coming into their own. The Comte found that this historical movement toward equality was a clear manifestation of the Will of God.⁸ Personal experience with the revolt of the masses of 1848 changed his mind on this subject. Oddly enough we find him fighting against what he had called the Will of God fifteen years before the revolution. But, a man learns much in fifteen years.

Tocqueville remarks that:

men are not corrupted by the exercise of power, or debased by the habit of obedience, but by the exercise of a power which they believe to be illegitimate and by obedience to a rule which they consider to be usurped and oppressive.⁹

⁵ *Recollections*, Preface. De Tocqueville holds a high place as a pioneer in the study of the history and historical significance of institutions. Volume II of *Democracy in America* traces the effect of democratic institutions upon American philosophy, religion, and economic life. Tocqueville carried to an extreme his tendency to attribute everything in the United States to the influence of democracy, as witness his chapters, "Influence of democracy on wages," "That democratic institutions tend to raise rents and shorten the terms of leases," "Influence of democracy on kindred."

⁶ *Democracy in America*, I, 6-10, also 41.

⁷ Volume II of *Democracy in America* particularly offends in this regard although it may be regarded as a valuable contribution toward the history of American life.

⁸ *Democracy in America*, I, 5-7.

⁹ *ibid.*, 7.

Commenting upon the general condition of democratic society he notes:¹⁰

... if there were less splendor than in the midst of an aristocracy, the contrast of misery would also be less frequent, the pleasures of enjoyment might be less excessive, but those of comfort would be more general; the sciences might be less perfectly cultivated, but ignorance would be less common; the impetuosity of the feelings would be repressed, and the habits of the nation softened; there would be more vices and fewer great crimes.

Democracy appeared in the new world because the emigrants had no notion of superiority over one another, and any attempt to establish an aristocracy failed because it was found that only by one's own exertions could a living be squeezed out of the wilderness.¹¹ The Comte admits an exception to this in the plantations of the south, but denounces these as opposed to true democracy in America. For him the only true aristocracy is a landed class, and riches cannot make an aristocrat. Were he to observe a century later, Tocqueville might have had to admit that an aristocracy of wealth could replace the landed aristocracy.

However, New England democracy is Tocqueville's ideal. As for the puritanical regulations and repressions of New England "democracy," the sovereign people wanted them, and therefore had a right to demand them from their government.¹² This seems a rather weak defence, smacking of the Rousseauvian idea that a citizen obeys himself when he obeys the state, and is therefore free. Perhaps this is a typical nineteenth century liberal evasion of an annoying difficulty.

In America, Tocqueville finds, the people reign as the Deity does in the universe.¹³ He finds that the New England township is the ideal democratic unit, a unit which seems to come directly from the hand of God.¹⁴ Indeed, centralisation of power is his great bugbear. This would destroy local liberties and local self-government as found in the township. Curtail local government, and the citizen will lose contact and interest in political affairs. Then democracy is gone. Centralisation will therefore transform citizens into subjects.¹⁵ Oddly enough, Tocqueville argues that crime can never flourish in the United States, since all the people are aligned against the criminal. Perhaps the fact that making money has supplanted politics as the major interest of Americans, sweeps away the foundations of this argument. If the moral standards of our everyday economic activity were higher, the argument might still hold true.

It is interesting to note that, a century ago, Tocqueville found that state power was the rule, federal power the exception in the United States. During his stay in the country, he observed a single determined state, South Carolina, successfully defy the Federal government. The Comte therefore held that the trend was definitely toward

¹⁰ *ibid.*, 10.

¹¹ *ibid.*, 28 et seq.

¹² Tocqueville quotes with approval Winthrop's definition of liberty from Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana*, II, 13. *Democracy in America*, I, 41.

¹³ *op. cit.* 55-57.

¹⁴ *op. cit.* 59 et seq. for his full discussion of township government in New England.

¹⁵ Tocqueville carefully weighs the arguments pro and con on this matter and finally concludes that the loss in efficiency under decentralisation is counterbalanced by gains in liberty and political vitality. Cf. *Democracy in America*, I, 84 et seq.

(Turn to page thirty-seven)

A Priest in Politics

John B. McGloin
San Francisco University

DURING the last presidential campaign, much ado was made of the fact that a Catholic priest had sponsored a political party and was actively propagandizing on behalf of its candidate. The inevitable question of the priest in politics received its perennial airing, and much was the discussion on either side.

Without presuming to settle the issue, or to labor obvious distinctions, the writer would simply call attention to an interesting incident in our American history, the example of a busy American metropolitan, esteemed predecessor of New York's Cardinal of Charity, who temporarily relinquished his diocesan cares to accept a commission abroad in the political interests of the United States. The prelate was John Joseph Hughes, Archbishop of New York, and the commission was tendered to him by William H. Seward, Secretary of State in Lincoln's cabinet.

Archbishop Hughes was one of the most distinguished men in American Church history. His life and works are too well known to the student of that history to need more than casual mention here. Hughes was consecrated Coadjutor-Bishop of New York on January 7, 1838, and four years later succeeded to the metropolitan see. He was a resourceful and spiritually minded churchman, second to none in his loyalty to his adopted country.

In 1855 he wrote:

I hold and have ever held that the position of a clergyman forbids him from taking any part in political questions, and that he could not be a partisan without at once endangering and degrading his influence as a priest. . . .

My own principles are that the American people are able to manage their affairs of state in their own way, without any guidance or instruction toward any class or religious denomination by either priests or parsons.¹

After reading this definite statement of principles, it is with momentary surprise that we see Archbishop Hughes raising no serious objection to his appointment as European agent of the Lincoln government during the Civil War. Was principle forgotten under the stress of internecine strife, or had time changed the prelate's views? Should history seek an explanation in the assumption that John Hughes was so utterly convinced of the justice of the Union's cause and of his sacred obligation to remain loyal to the flag of its forbears that he felt it incumbent upon him to serve the government in some capacity? Was this a case of the "priest in politics," or shall we contend that Hughes determined to offer himself upon the altar of statesmanship for his country's weal? Documentary evidence favors the latter hypothesis.

Secretary Seward knew and appreciated the Archbishop's consummate loyalty, for the latter had written to Bishop Lynch of Charleston (later his opponent as diplomatic representative of the Southern Confederacy in Europe):

I am an advocate for the sovereignty of every state in the union within the limits recognized and approved of by its own representative authority when the constitution was agreed upon. . . . But the constitution having been formed by the common consent

of all the parties—I maintain that no state has a right to secede, except in the manner provided for in the document itself.²

Similarly, in a letter to a brother bishop in the South, Hughes bluntly reiterates his militant patriotism:

The South . . . has taken upon itself to be judge in its own cause, to be witness in its own cause, and to execute, if necessary, by force of arms, its own decision. In a constitutional country this means either revolution or rebellion, since there are tribunals agreed upon by North and South, and supported by both for a period of more than seventy years. When these tribunals are set aside and men appeal to the sword, the Federal government has only to abdicate—or to meet sword with sword.³

We find this same sentiment of loyalty expressed in a letter to Secretary Seward:

Be as patient and considerate towards the state authorities of this so-called Confederacy as possible. Conquest is not altogether by the sword. Statesmanship, especially in our own circumstances, may have much to do with it. But *no backing down of the federal union!*⁴

That Archbishop Hughes' protestations of loyalty in a time of grave crisis did not go unappreciated is evidenced from the following extract of a letter written by Secretary Seward to the prelate: "I submit your letters to the President (Lincoln) who reads all you write to me with deep interest."⁵

This last letter was followed shortly by the commission previously alluded to in this study. Nor are we surprised to find the government entrusting such an office to such a patriotic citizen as Hughes.

The letter of appointment is interesting enough for a brief quotation:

To His Grace Archbishop Hughes:

Sir: You will repair to Paris and will deliver to Mr. Dayton the despatch herewith handed to you. . . . He will be expected to receive you as a trusted, confidential, loyal and devoted citizen, who assumes this duty at the cost of much sacrifice to himself, and only at the request of the President of the United States, upon mature conviction of its importance resulting from a conference with his advisers. While in Paris you will study how, in conjunction with Mr. Dayton, you can promote healthful opinions concerning the great cause in which our country is now engaged in arms. You will extend your visit to any part of Europe you may think proper, and will consider yourself at liberty to stay until recalled.

I have the honor to be,

Your Grace's Very Obedient Servant,
William H. Seward.⁶

That Hughes reacted favorably to his appointment is clear from a letter which he wrote to his friend in Rome, Cardinal Barnabo, Prefect of the Propaganda. It was written from Liverpool, and informs Barnabo that Hughes had accepted the office at the special request of President Lincoln, and that he hopes that the mission will redound to the benefit of Catholics, and to the promotion of the best interests of the Church.⁷

A protestation of his utter impartiality—which reminds us of the "I bless peace, not war" of Pious X, is found in

² John R. G. Hassard, *Life of John Hughes* (New York. D. Appleton & Co., 1866), 438.

³ *Ibid.*, 439.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 446.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 447.

⁶ Cf. *Catholic Historical Review*, III (October, 1917), 336-339.

⁷ Hassard, *op. cit.*, 449-450.

¹ J. L. Spalding, *Life of Archbishop Spalding* (New York. Catholic Publishing Society, 1873.) 189.

a subsequent letter to the same person when Hughes writes:

My mission was, and is, a mission of peace between France and England on the one side, and the United States on the other. . . . I made known to the President that if I should come to Europe, it would not be as a partisan of the North more than of the South; that I should represent the interests of the South as well as of the North,—in short, the interests of all the United States, just the same as if they had never been distracted by this present civil war. The people of the South know that I am not opposed to their interests. They have even published that in their papers, and some say that my coming to Europe is with a view to bring about a reconciliation between the two sections of the country. But, in fact, no one but myself, either North or South, knows the entire object of my visit to Europe. . . . I made known to the officials in Washington that I could accept no official appointment from them; that it was not in their power to bestow any distinction upon me equal to that which the Church had already conferred; and that I could not undertake to fulfill any written instructions; but that if I came I should be left to my own discretion, to say and to do what is most likely to accomplish good, or at least to prevent evil. Then they said that I should go with a *carte blanche*—do and say for the interests of the country, prevention of war, and interests of humanity, anything that I should think proper. . . . I would take it as a great favor if you would explain briefly these circumstances to our most Holy Father, the Pope.⁸

Archbishop Hughes arrived in Paris in November, 1861, and it was largely through his efforts that France was prevented from following in the footsteps of England, and throwing the weight of her sympathies with the Confederate States. After a three-month sojourn in France, Hughes visited Ireland, where his presence aroused an intense enthusiasm for the North. Later in the same month of February he journeyed to Rome, where he utilized his opportunity to inform Pius IX and Cardinal Antonelli, the papal Secretary of State, of the true condition of affairs in America. Antonelli it was who was to deal the death blow to any Confederate hopes of papal recognition by his famous words to R. M. Blatchford, our Chargé d'Affaires at Rome: "If I had the honor to be an American citizen, I would do everything in my power to preserve the strength of the nation undivided."⁹

The Papal Secretary also expressed his opinion that if the rebellion of the seceding states succeeded, the United States would shortly be classified as so many other of the South American republics—a place of unfortunate unrest and revolutionary coups d'état.¹⁰

Archbishop Hughes sailed early in August for New York. His biographer, Brann, has the following to say about this return:

On the Archbishop's arrival, the whole city turned out to greet him. The municipal authorities presented him with congratulatory addresses. After a few days' rest he went to Washington. There he was invited to dinner by Secretary Seward. The day fixed for the dinner was Friday, and the Archbishop suggested that it was not a good day for a banquet. "Never mind," said the Secretary, "I shall see that you will be provided for." When the very large and distinguished company met in the dining hall, there was no meat of any kind on the table. All were compelled to eat fish. The Archbishop often said that this was the most delicate compliment ever paid to him. Mr. Lincoln's government soon after intimated to the Holy See that it would be pleased if the Archbishop, who had done so much for the country, should be raised to the dignity of cardinal.¹¹

It is significant, in view of our opening paragraph, to note that not everyone praised the prelate for his fulfillment of a political appointment. Some there were, both clergy and laity, who heartily disapproved of his activities, and who expressed their disapprobation. To his critics,

Hughes returned the answer that he was confident of the approval of Pius and Antonelli, and that if censure were deserved, he should have received it at Rome instead of the honors which the Pope and the entire Papal Court had shown him.

But though the Archbishop was confident of the papal approval in his regard, the persistent storm of American criticism nettled him, especially the disparaging remarks of the *Baltimore Catholic Mirror*. The prelate doubtless distinguished in his own mind between unselfish statesmanship and purely partisan politics. In view of his earlier utterances, Hughes would have been the first to disallow any debasing of the clerical dignity by indulgence in statecraft; but he did believe in statesmanship. His action, he concluded, was an honest and sincere attempt to win early peace for the American people by presenting a proper view of the situation to papal authorities in Rome. His mistake, if mistake there was, was at least an honest one.

But Hughes determined to reply to his critics and reply he did in his diocesan religious organ, the *Metropolitan Record*. To stem the tide of criticism brought against him in the Eternal City, he wrote as follows to a friend there:

Let me say, then, what I have to say in the following order:

1. That so far as my conscience can be a guide, I have said, I have done nothing, in Europe or America, which a sense of duty and of zeal for the present and future interests of the Catholic Church in the United States would not warrant, almost demand.

2. I have made known . . . the reasons and motives which induced me to visit Europe . . . in my intercourse with their Eminences the Cardinals, some, understanding all this, approved; others, who did not understand it, expressed no opinion.

3. I would beseech His Eminence and the other princes to do me one favor; and that is, if any charge or accusation, whether in speech or in writing, be made against me, it should be made known to me, that I might have an opportunity to offer an explanation; and if that explanation should prove unsatisfactory to them, I should have nothing more to say.¹²

From the above, it is evident that Archbishop Hughes suffered no qualms of conscience over his record as an American diplomat. However, in view of the acrimonious criticism resulting from his acceptance of Secretary Seward's appointment, one wonders if the prelate's action was entirely for the best. That his motives were of the highest is testified to by ample documentary evidence. The question of the opportuneness of Hughes's action will always be one of history's many moot problems.

DELAYED

Unfortunately, we have been forced to hold one of the best articles that has come to the editorial desk. A study of Pius V from the pen of Father Pedro Leturia of the Gregorian University was to have been published serially in this and our next issue. It would have been difficult, if at all possible, to find a more competent authority on the Dominican Saint of the Catholic Reformation. We regret this delay, which, incidentally, breaks the continuity of our series on the Popes.

The Spanish war still remains a good museum piece for the student of historical method. Critics are beginning to tell us why the reporters didn't know what was going on. Ignorance of language and distance from the scene of action account for many a hoax. Read "Why the Press Failed in Spain?", by Joseph F. Thorning (*Catholic World*, December, 1937).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Diplomatic Correspondence* (1864) II, 1062.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Catholic Historical Review*, loc. cit.

¹² Hassard, *op. cit.*, 489.

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EDITORIALS

Great Laymen

Rather stealthily we are launching a series of studies of great Catholic laymen. Unlike our extended "Symposium on the Great Popes," this series cannot well be crowded into one year. To deal with it adequately in a single issue would be impossible. Our policy will be to publish one or two papers in each number of the BULLETIN. Circumstances militate against a chronological order. This difficulty can be remedied by a special index at the end of the series, perhaps two years hence. Naturally, nineteenth century candidates will outnumber all others. It is best that this should be so. High authority has called the present, "the age of the layman." The quest for models in method and spirit will be most fruitful in the recent past. The problems of today have their origin in the Industrial-Liberal-Capitalist period. We can learn from leaders who combatted under conditions like our own. Ozanam, Windthorst, De Mun, Garcia Moreno and a dozen others can help us. Nor must we forget the great laywomen! But it will be well also to reach further back into the past. Joseph Görres was featured in our last issue. Orestes Brownson appears in this issue. St. Louis will add variety to the next. We shall make an effort to provide bibliographical data as the series proceeds.

Creative Revolution

Bolshevism may yet prove a blessing. It is clarifying issues that have too long been vague. It may provide the shock, or the scare, that will rouse our apathetic millions from their enervating slumbers. It has already been the occasion of some very wholesome self-criticism. Without its mounting menace to our security and happiness the call to "Creative Revolution" might have the hollow ring of unreality.*

Such a call has been sounded by the highest authority on earth. Several recent "revolutionary" books have paraphrased and expanded the pioneer utterances of Leo XIII and the even more forthright warnings of Pius XI. One of these volumes is the small and compact bomb of literary dynamite hurled into the Catholic camp by J. F. T. Prince. If he and one or two other authors had not the

authority of Pius and Leo, of Manning and Ketteler, of St. Thomas, the Fathers of the Church and New Testament behind them, they might excusably (as they probably will blindly) be answered by a lazy shrug of the shoulders. If they were not out to prod into belated action those who should be conscious of the greatest revolution in history, reference to them in the BULLETIN might need some explanation.

This editorial was well under way when the discovery was made that Father Gillis had anticipated us in a ten-page masterly eulogium of *Creative Revolution* in the *Catholic World* for October. "No one accustomed to make in public or private a harangue about Communism should," he writes, "be permitted . . . to hold forth again until he has at least inspected carefully this little volume or its equivalent, if there be an equivalent." For the busy reader the editorial of Father Gillis may serve as an equivalent. Our limited space permits only a few sample quotations from the book.

The author portrays the Church at war with (1) economic despotism, (2) enslaving Communism, and (3) Nordic paganism. He finds that "Communism is not radical enough," that Christianity alone "can go to the root of our troubles." Christ alone "is capable of transforming society, of renewing and restoring social justice," while "Bolshevism, like Liberalistic Capitalism is essentially reactionary." The whole book is a commentary on "the revolution set going by the Son of God," which was two thousand years ago and should be today, "more of a menace to materialist empire than Communism can be to our materialist civilization." He sees the diabolic atheism of the Soviets for what it is, but he derives "no comfort from the raggedness, the incompleteness of things in Russia." The chief object of his scathing attack is, however, that Conservatism which is

the pseudo-philosophy of the prosperous. Inspired by a convenient fatalism in respect to the submerged, relegating economic ills to theotechnic treatment alone [This sounds like "pie in the sky by and by when you die."], it associates itself with an ideology affording compensation hereafter. It is an advantageous postponement. We only regret that Christianity is thus, by conservatism's adoption of it, miscalled (rather excusably) the opium of the people.

He maintains that "If Catholics were sufficiently keen and sincere, sufficiently devoted to the leadership of the

* *Creative Revolution*, by J. F. T. Prince. Milwaukee. Bruce. 1937. pp. XIII + 106. \$1.50.

Holy Father, the social encyclicals of Pius XI would herald a revolution surpassing the wildest dreams of the proletariat—and the most fearful nightmares of the pocket-conscious.” He considers the revolt of the twentieth century “a standing indictment of neglectful Christians. . . . Like the smug heresy of the Pharisees,” he says, “our apostasy lies secretly in a protestation of faith which is cynical of its own efficacy. And if we lack the courage to act, let us at least have the honesty to see.” There is much good history in all this.

Medieval Sanity

During the Middle Ages Paris was the intellectual capital of Christendom. But the Scholasticism, philosophical and theological, which centered there was not a French thing. It was European; it was universal; it was catholic. The great medieval teaching guild which we call the University had its “nations” with their rivalries, their wrangling and fist-fighting, their mutual jealousies, hatreds and contempts. Among the best known masters there was no great Parisian; strictly speaking there was no Frenchman. And yet in the Republic of Thought there were no “foreigners.” Albert from Germany, Roger Bacon from England or Aquinas from southern Italy was as much at home as was Abelard from nearby Brittany. Alexander of Hales, John of Salisbury, Bonaventure and Duns Scotus were members of one great family, spoke a common language, worshipped at the same altar and pursued in their study, writing and teaching the same ideal, universal truth. They moved among the scholars of Paris with all the easy assurance of an American senator in Washington.

At the Harvard Tercentennial a year ago Etienne Gilson made a brilliant plea for a return to Medieval Universalism.* No more vital message could have been delivered to the remarkable aristocracy of learning which the festivities had gathered from many lands. The Paris professor gently repudiated the strained racial interpretations of recent writers who have discovered in the achievements of the Middle Ages a flowering of German genius on French soil. He admitted local and national coloring in the thought of the time; but truth, religious, philosophical, scientific or moral, was one and unchanging for all races and all nations. Socrates, Plato and the Hebrew Prophets, the New Testament writers, the Fathers of the Church and the Scholastic philosophers made their historic contributions, not to this or that kind of truth, but to truth which is absolute and universal. The modern historian or scientist or mere literary propagandist should learn from the medieval scholar. For him “there was an order of absolute religious truth, of absolute ethical goodness, of absolute political and social justice, to which differences had to submit and by which they had to be judged.”

In the Harvard audience were the élite of the learned world. In them Gilson’s appeal for a revival of clearer and more objective thinking should have awakened, not so much a nostalgia for a lost golden age as a desire and determination to remedy the evils consequent upon the disruption of European unity and the emancipation from God and truth of an insane individualism. Any reluctance

to make the effort should yield before the appalling present threat of state-decreed party dogmas. But even if no totalitarian tyranny were at hand with its warning against the perils and the futility of intellectual liberalism, the sad fact that so many pseudo-philosophy professors are feeding immature minds (emphasis on immaturity, not on minds!) with the fallacy of expressing reality, historical or philosophical, “as they see it,” should make violent medievalists of us all. We are not so sanguine as M. Gilson, who hopes for a restoration of sound thinking, if we interpret his words aright, without disturbing religious subjectivism, though the attempt would be a step in the right direction. The medieval thinker tried to see reality, past, present and future, human and divine, *as it is* or was. Too many moderns are content to have a *view-point*, an *opinion* or merely a *way of looking at things*.

Dictatorship

We do not like dictators. But the historian cannot afford to ignore them. They are making a major part of our current history. More to the point, they are largely the outcome of historical causes which were fondly thought to be leading in the direction of a triumph of democracy. That the muddy flow of Liberalism should find a natural outlet in the sink of Communism is not surprising, though it is sad enough. That high-tension Nationalism should culminate in exaggerations of Fascism or National Socialism is even more natural. When Hitler and Stalin (we omit the modified dictatorships of Mussolini and half-a-dozen lesser men) undertook to build a new world they had ready to hand abundant materials from the recent past. Without attempting to assess their relative importance in the new structure, we merely allude to some of the elements that boiled over into the last World War and are boiling again for the next: industrial technique, social atheism, earth-bound and unmoral business, demagoguery and the emotion-ruled masses. All of these are peculiar to the era of “Democracy”; all of them prepare the way for the Dictator. Dictatorship is less a revolution than a logical culmination. It may be a necessary stage in our return to sanity.

A survey of dictatorship in the modern world, excellent within its limits, was published two years ago.* It has lost none of its timeliness. A lower-priced text edition might even tempt one to use it as a basic text in a course on world problems. Three of the seven studies in it were read in a symposium at the A. H. A. convention of 1935. The book is ably edited by Guy Stanton Ford. It should be supplemented, however, by readings from the Catholic camp. Waldemar Gurian, for example, in his *Future of Bolshevism* clarifies the essential similarity between Soviet and Nazi rule. In the book under review Hans Kohn offers an enlightening comparative study of “Communist and Fascist Dictatorship.” The surface differences between the two are obvious; they are alike in their absoluteness, indoctrination and youth appeal. Kohn also aptly remarks that the 1934 Austrian Constitution of Engelbert Dollfuss was not Fascist, for the simple reason that it began with the Name of God, “. . . from whom all laws emanate.”

* *Medieval Universalism and Its Present Value*, by Etienne Gilson. N. Y. Sheed & Ward. 1937. pp. 22. 35 cents.

* *Dictatorship in the Modern World*, edited by Guy Stanton Ford. Minneapolis. University of Minnesota Press. 1935. pp. VII + 179. \$2.50. Text, \$2.00.

Orestes A. Brownson

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TOWARD the middle of the last century, Transcendentalism, the last flower of the "enlightenment", was coming to full bloom in New England. The deep reaction to the harsh Puritanism of the preceding epoch was this preaching of salvation for all men. The cult of humanity had developed into something of a fetish worship, and sentiment and social consciousness were taking the place of moral integrity in a world which esteemed itself intellectually and socially perfect. Then, too, Victorianism was swaying the minds of the élite, and the romantic world was thrilling to the "wild rhythms" of Longfellow. At its very height, this sentiment and social consciousness, this humanitarianism and romanticism were suddenly given a jar which was as jolting as it was unexpected. One of their leaders, a Unitarian minister, an editor of repute and a pillar of the standing order, had turned his back on it all and become a Catholic. Catholicism, at least that with which New England had concerned itself, was considered old and outmoded, something that only the poor, ignorant alien could embrace. That one of its own, who had founded the "Society for Christian Union and Progress", should have united himself to a decadent and moribund institution, created more than a stir. But it had happened, for in the last week of May, 1844, Orestes Augustus Brownson presented himself at the Episcopal residence to be received into the Church.

The Convert

The blow was all the more startling because Brownson's natal environment and upbringing were not such as would lead one to imagine that he would one day become the outstanding Catholic layman of the country. Catholicism had not ensconced itself so deeply in the Green Mountains that children there were either "born to the faith" or surrounded by such circumstances as would lead naturally to an early conversion.

Three years after the turn of the century, on the 16th day of September, 1803, Stockbridge, Vermont, had rejoiced in the birth of twins, one a girl, the other a boy. The boy was Orestes Augustus Brownson, his sister, Daphne Augusta. It was not long after when his mother, now a widow, placed him at the home of some farm folk, strict in their morals, but of not too religious a turn. While he was taught by them to be honest, and never to steal as much as the value of a pin, he does not seem to have had much religious experience outside the arguments on the street corner, or the rousing sermons of the Methodist minister who, of the numerous sectarians in the town, preached in the loudest tones. It was this congregation which proved to him most entertaining because it gave the best picture of hell-fire.

Brownson, like many self-made men, was robbed of his boyhood, feeling younger at fifty-four than he had felt at ten. His supply of books was meager, but not of a juvenile nature; Watt's *Psalms* and *Divine Songs*, *The Franklin Primer*, Edwards's *History of Redemption*, Davies's *Sermons*, Sanders's *History of the Indian Wars* were on the list, but none occupied so prominent a place

as the Bible, the whole of which he had read before he was eight. By fourteen he was delving into Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* and struggling hard to acquire a little of the broad knowledge which was to be one of his characteristics.

Locke and his confrères, however, proved to be too much of a spiritual diet, so that by the time he was a printer's apprentice at Ballston Spa, where his mother had taken him, his doubts and worries and anxieties had driven him to abandon his reason, disregard what he considered some of the most reasonable advice of his childhood, and join the Presbyterians. The advice had been to keep away from the "new lights". But after all, Presbyterianism did not seem so far removed from the standing order, and it was of utmost necessity that he save his naturally religious nature from utter scepticism. The hart had started toward the fountain.

The suppression of his liberty, the Universalism of his aunt and her library and the lack of magisterial authority proved to be too much for Brownson, and within two years he was fast reacting to the Presbyterian espionage of Ballston, toward the comforting doctrine of Universalism. It was in this creed that he was ordained minister, and felt contented enough to steal forty winks during the sermon of the occasion. After preaching in middle New York, editing a paper and finding Universalism too spineless for a man like himself, he began to lose faith in the religion of man, and adopted man as a religion. Since Universalism excluded a supernatural end, he had no choice but to turn to the natural. What he could not do for divinity he would do for humanity.

In this spirit he became interested in the Working Man's Party. But its political impotence, and his defection as editor to the other candidate careened to disaster, and with his paper's popularity went all hope of benefiting the working man by a proletarian party. Such a work required the union of all parties. While destruction had proven easy without religion, reconstruction without the same means could not be effected. As humanity had drained dry all his natural enthusiasm, he turned to independent preaching. He had not lost faith in humanity, but he had to seek elsewhere a prop for his faith. He found it in natural religion, and while confirming his belief in the dignity of human nature, he felt more and more drawn to Unitarianism, in which creed he accepted a pulpit and settled as minister.

Brownson, up to this time, had been governed for the most part by various religious creeds. Now the reign of philosophy was to begin. Benjamin Constant soon convinced him of the evolution of religion, and Boston found Brownson establishing his "Society for Christian Union and Progress". Saint-Simon, Lerroux, Cousin, all had their influence, until after his own *Boston Quarterly* had merged with the *Democratic Review*, and he had accepted an editorship on the *Christian World*, he began a series of articles on the mission of Our Lord which aroused enough concern to be quoted by not only Protestant but Catholic journals as well. It was not until he had begun this series

of articles that he had any thought of becoming a Catholic. But at their conclusion (the editor had refused to print the last installment), he was driven by his own irresistible logic to the very threshold of the Church. Here he paused; and for the first time in his life he hesitated to carry out his doctrines to their logical conclusions. It was not until the last week of May, 1844, that he tremblingly presented himself to Benedict Joseph Fenwick, the Bishop of Boston, for admission into the Church.

The Man

The story of Brownson is the story of his conversion. Like Newman his name will ever summon up the concept convert. Yet with his life turned into one of controversy he was to do massive work for the Church of his adoption. He had wished, on entering the Church to leave his *Review*, as being no longer free in theological discussions, and too unfamiliar with Catholic dogma to assume the position of teacher. But under the pressure of the Bishop of Boston he held to his post, and entered the lists for the Church, discussing politics, philosophy and theology, with all who cared to cross swords with him. Four volumes do not contain all of his many controversies. He was too familiar with the enemy's position not to have a decided advantage. Besides, he was a perfect logician. Positing his terms and definitions, he thunders inevitably on to his conclusion. With no one did he hesitate to take sides, and even Newman's *Essay on Development of Christian Doctrine* came under the fire of one who had entered the Church which was the one possessor of the fixed body of truth. From the very first issues of his *Review* to the very last in which the *Dublin Review* still found issue for controversy, he was ever defending his position, even at times with a large portion of the Catholic press barking at his heels.

But one cannot help admiring the earnestness of the man. When he began his *Review* as a Catholic, there was not an article printed except some few literary notices which had not previously been submitted to the bishop or to a theologian appointed by him, and the propriety of almost every discussion was talked over before he had written a word.

At this distant date one can see the note of loneliness inevitable in a life such as his. There is something pathetic in this giant standing his ground alone, and lonely. He fought his battles, but a sigh for fellowship escaped his lips. He was too sincere and "big" to understand pettiness and hypocrisy in others.

His were the faults of greatness; faults which those of less stature are apt to magnify. What he had gained in his life, he had gained by himself. He was a man who had developed his own thoughts and followed where they would lead him. Because he had had no formal course in philosophy, but had gathered it from various sources as he chanced upon them, his training was not systematic. This left its impression in his later life, when he was called upon to defend so ordered and methodical a system of philosophical and theological truth, as that which the Church provided him.

In his intense search after the truth he had wandered over the entire field of error, and it was inevitable that a few of the burrs should remain in his thought. Looking with decided disfavor on the Scholastic theory of cog-

nition, he leaned heavily on the doctrine of "objective intuition". This and the obscurity of his writing make his "ontologism" a still controverted point. It was on this theory of cognition that the *Dublin Review* undertook to quarrel with the old man of seventy-two years.

Brownson was above all honest. He was often too honest for his prudent friends. He had met so much "policy" that, by the time he was throwing over Universalism, the principle article of his creed was honesty. He had met too much diplomacy in the Protestant circles, where he was told not that his doubts were wrong, but that it was wrong to express them. He had been rebuked not for expressing falsehood, but for being impolitic about it. He had come to hate expediency through association, and was not seldom to startle those with whom he associated. He could not be a party man and lost his job as editor because he supported the other candidate. Furthermore, after he had joined the ranks of the Democrats to obtain his cherished ambition of helping the laboring classes, he considered it a question of honesty to state his extreme views on the equality of men. His party had to disown him. Even then he created a serious hindrance in the approaching presidential election.

His views, besides being stated honestly and at times with not a great deal of tact, were progressive enough to attract attention of themselves. He had the foresight to recognize the evils of the factory system in a world which was utterly unconcerned about alleviating the ills of the working class. A great deal of his energy was spent in behalf of the laboring classes, and it was in something of the same spirit that, while he admitted some foundation for the hostility of the Know-Nothings, he undertook to defend the foreigner against their attacks.

This progressive outlook had the bad effect of leading him to opinions bordering on the extreme. His writings were examined by Rome for their liberalistic tendencies, and, while not condemned, he was cautioned to be circumspect on certain points. He proved too radical and fond of novelty for most of the Hierarchy and the Catholic public. With their lack of support, after twenty years of ceaseless effort, he had to discontinue publishing his *Review*. Ever undaunted, within seven years he was at his desk again, an old man of almost seventy years.

Brownson's achievements were prodigious. He could read Latin, French, German and Italian works and criticize their contents, whether it were philosophy, theology or politics. A great portion of his own twenty volumes was for the time, and with the time sinks into oblivion. But much of his writing has permanent value, and deserves a better fate than has been accorded it. Like everything else about the man, his work as an editor was enormous (a trait Kitson's colossal bronze tries to capture). He was editor of more papers and magazines than most people consistently read. His own publications he carried on almost single handed; and, at one time or other contributed to, or edited such a variety of publications as the *Gospel Advocate and Impartial Investigator*, *Christian Examiner*, *Boston Quarterly Review*, *Democratic Review*, *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, *Boston Reformer*, *The Christian World*, *Ave Maria*, *The Tablet* (New York), *Catholic World* and the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*.

Brownson is the first landmark of midcentury American Catholic literature and culture. Because they were few and of indifferent ability, he stood head and shoulders above his confrères. He was a seeker after truth, and often varied with the changing winds of thought; he was a convert but fought for his Church to the point of lonely sensitiveness; he was honest to a fault; he was progressive to an extreme; but he still remains a giant among the lights of the nineteenth century; a philosopher, a literateur, an editor, a controversialist, a Catholic. On Easter Monday, April 17, 1876, at his son's home in Detroit, Michigan, his restless soul shook itself free from the

shadows of earth and the limitations of human endeavor to enter, we trust, upon the possession of the fullness of truth toward which he ever struggled.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Brownson's autobiography, *The Convert* (Dunigan: New York, 1857) deals for the most part with his intellectual wanderings up to the time of his conversion. The standard life, *Orestes A. Brownson's Early, Middle and Later Life* (3 vols. Brownson: Detroit, 1898-1900), is by his son, Henry F. Brownson. Daniel Sargent has a recent and popular sketch in his *Four Independents* (Sheed and Ward: New York, 1935). Dom. Virgil Michel's *The Critical Principles of Orestes A. Brownson* (Cath. U.: Washington, 1918) contains a list of magazine articles. Brownson's *Works* have been edited and published in twenty volumes by his son (Brownson: Detroit, 1898-1908).

High School History Teaching, II*

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It was observed above that special care should be taken to do justice to the dull, the diffident, the unprepared pupil, but equally great care should be taken with all in regard to diagnosis of pupil difficulties, defective study habits, etc. Here are some beneficial helps offered by Tryon on "how to study":

I In general

1 Have a regular time for study:

There should be no interference with these study periods. A good habit early formed and steadfastly adhered to will work later on almost automatically.

2 Have a regular place for study:

Outside the quiet of the school's study hall there may not be the most desirable conditions at home. Consultation with the teacher will help the pupil to adjust himself to an unfavorable milieu, to find a new one.

3 Developed constancy and perseverance at the work in hand:

This is, perhaps, the most valuable ultimate objective of secondary school training. It cannot be overemphasized. A "pep" talk on this is always in order.

II How to study History

1 Get the topic or topics clearly in mind: e. g., *The Third Republic of France*:

Why called the "third"?

Why "a republic"?

Its tempestuous beginnings;

its earliest supporters;

its opponents;

its turn against the Church;

its principal achievements.

2 Get the details: dates, names, activity of opponents and supporters.

3 After a reading for the big points: close the book and go over it all mentally, even formulating thoughts in words. Make notes. Compare after a while your notes made from memory with those in the book.

4 Once the main points have been mastered: connect the details with the principal topics, closing the book and going through the same process.

5 TALK it over with others—an excellent practice.

6. Associations:

Compare and associate the newly learned facts with parallel and similar events in previously acquired matter. Contrast with contemporaneous events elsewhere.

Judd's View: This procedure can be followed in all history classes, once the secondary level has been reached. Of course, it is true, as Judd says (*Psychology of High School Subjects*), that in the early years of high school the teacher will often have to be satisfied with a mere ability to comprehend a coherent narrative of successive events, but gradually as the boy advances from the first year of high school to college he can be made to understand the influences which physical facts (e. g., correlation between geography and history) have upon the making of history. He can secure a mastery of the evidences on which history is based, and finally will develop a critical sense in regard to the different text-books and authorities attempting to interpret history at given periods.

Besides the matter of supervising study habits, the history teacher should exercise much care in training pupils in *note-taking* and the other types of written work with which history is concerned. We might group Tryon's ideas in this matter under three headings:

I Note-Taking

1 General Uses of Note-Taking:

- a) to preserve records for possible future use—
- b) to fix the subject in mind *through the effort demanded*—
- c) to keep a record of the reading done outside class.

2 Specific Uses:

- a) preparation for the next recitation.
- b) an aid in preparing a theme or oral report.
- c) review for examinations.

3 Method of Note-Taking:

- a) put "ideal outlines" on the board.
- b) let imperfect ones be put there to be criticized and improved by the pupils themselves.
- c) furnish occasions for practice in taking notes on lectures by the teacher and on reports by the class.

II Other Types of Written Work

Briefs, short themes on historical topics, imaginary

*Cf. *The Teaching of History in Junior and Senior High Schools*, by Rolla M. Tryon. Ginn & Co., 1921.

diaries (the author gives a "dandy," supposedly written by Henry VIII's sister. In it she deplores the folly of her "burly" brother at the time of his divorce. It is actually the work of a girl in her third year of high school).

Still other forms:

Imaginary letters, editorials, notes on lectures and reports, digests, abstracts of collateral reading, direct quotations, brief statements relating to the life and work of historical persons, newspapers.

How to train them to this? Read the example Tryon uses, the one quoted above. Make up some of your own. Boys love to do this, when they have sufficient material at hand. This is an excellent way of "imbedding" the history for life. Read some of the better ones of past years. Preserve cleverly written ones from year to year. This, incidentally offers them a challenge of competing with or outwitting their predecessors.

How is the teacher of history to measure the results of his teaching? Tryon has his misgivings about standardized tests for history examinations. He fears that they fail to promote "the historical sense and historical-mindedness." He is, however, open to conviction, and, no doubt, the progress that has been made in the construction of objective tests since 1921, would impress him. Certainly these short objective tests are admirably suited to the brief five or ten minute test conducted *daily* for all. Tryon's examinations, then, in history, would be the traditional written exercise performed by each member of the class. Specific answers are put down to questions set by the teacher. And this will not be a mere feat of memory for with Johnson (*History Methods*, 428) Tryon agrees that an examination could well incorporate some of these items:

- 1 the interpretation of a map or picture
- 2 the analysis of a paragraph or page of history
- 3 the judgment of an historical character from a given description
- 4 selecting of facts of importance and explaining their importance
- 5 discovery in given conditions of resemblances, differences, relations, tendencies.

In addition to the Johnson suggestions, Tryon approves of this excellent method of examination in use in the Julia Richman High School, N. Y.:

Have the examination written outside of school, a copy of the directions along with a topic being given each member of the class two or three days before the time set by the school program for the first examination. No two topics . . . alike and none . . . previously given in class.

That would offer a real challenge to the student. For variety's sake I think it could be tried occasionally, especially in third and fourth high.

The last point towards which we turn our attention in this paper is the consideration and place of collateral reading. This point is vital. One authority says: "It has been asserted that if pupils can be got interested in history reading, the *purpose of the history class has been fulfilled*." No doubt this will mean that the teacher will have to have a wide acquaintance with all sorts of historical literature. The effort demanded will be well repaid, for it would be difficult to exaggerate the benefits

of these two matters: the importance of collateral reading and the place of the library in regard to the history class. A high school boy will probably not see eye to eye with the teacher in the demands that are made of him, but outside an intelligent understanding of Catholic living, nothing will serve him better in life than a fondness for and an acute interest in books and the multiform concerns accompanying reading. The aims of collateral reading Tryon lists as follows:

- 1 It helps create a life-interest in history
- 2 It helps create a permanent taste for substantial historical reading
- 3 It helps create a critical judgment
- 4 It stimulates independent judgment
- 5 It acquaints pupils with diverse forms in which historical materials are recorded:
Biographies, letters, books of travel, reminiscences, novels, memoirs, chronicles, legends, stories, myths, fairy tales, newspapers, magazines.

Mode of acquiring the habit of doing collateral reading:

- 1 Consult books of history other than the text. "One can never get a true knowledge unless one reads broadly and intelligently in other standard works."
It is only too plain that no one can criticize, compare, contrast as one must in history unless he have some authorities' views other than the author's.
- 2 Work up some topics quite thoroughly.
- 3 Read historical fiction (cf. Allan Farrell, *Historical Bulletin*, I, 32-41; II, 28, 44; VIII, 67, 68; IX, 14, 15, 18, 19; XII, 73-75.) and much current history.

Amount and Kinds of Collateral Reading:

How much should be done? That is a hard question to answer. Certainly the old mistake of the North Central should be avoided: "don't measure it in pages." Here is a good bit of advice: "Some should be done every day." If the teacher has the semester's work well planned, day-by-day assignments can be provided, and reported on in class. This would refer to required collateral reading. Optional collateral reading should be done spontaneously and, as a matter of fact, will be done just as soon as one's interests have been awakened. For the best results in this second kind of collateral reading there should be close cooperation between the history and English departments. In order to facilitate the teacher's work, the school library should furnish a wide variety of historical literature:

- 1 Parallel texts
- 2 One-volume narratives with a fuller account than the text
- 3 Books dealing with a definite period
- 4 Biography
- 5 Works on social, intellectual and economic life

Several readings of this little book and long reflection over its contents still find me enthusiastic over its sober and practical make-up. Indeed, I would not hesitate to say that the official guidance programs of Germany and France, detailed as they are and compiled by the best minds of those two nations, have made no more comprehensive study of this matter than has Dr. Tryon. History teaching as he sees it is no longer a feat of memorization or a mere story-telling process.

Communal Movement vs. Feudalism

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FEUDALISM has been defined as "anarchy roughly organized." This condition was most widespread in Europe during the ninth and tenth centuries. The anarchy was caused by external and internal circumstances. The external causes were the invasions of the Northmen and the Hungarians. The internal causes were the petty wars of rival landowners. This anarchy had to be at least roughly organized in order to prevent the complete extinction of society.

During this confused period most of the old Roman cities decreased considerably in population. The few remaining inhabitants generally moved into one corner of the old town, fortified it securely, and lived there under the guidance of the bishop of the place, leaving the remainder of the former town to fall into decay. The inhabitants supported themselves by cultivating the surrounding fields. Wealthy men who had acquired property outside the old Roman cities generally built as large a castle as possible, with as many other buildings as were necessary, and surrounded them all with a huge wall containing sturdy towers from which the enemy could be repelled. The serfs belonging to the owner of such a fortress as well as smaller landowners of the surrounding districts, who willingly surrendered their property in return for protection, had a place of secure refuge within these strong walls during times of invasion or attack. The larger monasteries served a similar purpose by fortifying their buildings in the same manner.

Such monasteries, castles, and former towns had to keep bodies of trained knights to repel attacks. Even after the period of invasion had ceased unscrupulous nobles frequently assaulted the castles of their rivals, and anarchy continued. There was need for some sort of rough organization. If a noble succeeded in overcoming his enemy, he not infrequently granted the conquered territory to one of his more trust-worthy knights, who took an oath to help his benefactor in time of war. This was one way in which the relationship of lord and vassal came into existence. The vassal would move to his new domain with a body of knights from the now over-crowded militia of his lord, and in a few years might overcome some rival whose property he would dispose of in a manner similar to that whereby he had acquired his own. As time went on the system developed, obligations became more rigid, and thus society became more highly organized. A great deal of anarchy still remained, however, as wars between rival lords became more frequent and vassals were constantly called upon to fulfill the obligations imposed by their oath.

In the course of time two features came to be recognized as characteristics of the feudal system; land-tenure and personal service. The whole economy of the period depended directly on land-tenure or on those offices which were intimately connected with its administration. This implied obligations of personal service, either military or clerical. The latter obligations were chiefly in connection with the lord's court, the jurisdiction of which extended

to all cases on the domain. In addition each lord and vassal had to maintain a sufficient number of serfs to enable him and his retainers and dependents to live off the produce of the land. Bishops and abbots either became lords of Church domains or vassals relying on the protection of lay lords. In the latter case they might be bound to furnish knight or clerical service unless they held their land in *frankalmoin*. Thus it came about that feudal society was composed of those who prayed, those who fought, and those who labored on the land.

During the eleventh century a new group made its appearance in the midst of feudal society. It was an element which did not readily combine with the existing social structure and consequently caused no little disturbance. It took a long time before any one discovered the exact proportion in which this new element could be mixed with the old without causing an explosion. Only after much experimentation was the desired result attained.

This new element that was added to feudal society in the eleventh century was the townsman. He was not one who prayed, fought, or worked on the land, but one whose primary occupation was trade. The chief obstacle to his success was that very dependence of personal service which was essential to feudalism. As his position was not dependent on land-tenure but on trade, so it implied not personal service but personal liberty. This is what made him such a disturbing element in his surroundings. Yet some scholars have maintained that, when the townsmen combined together and formed what were called communes precisely for the purpose of obtaining that personal liberty which was essential to trade, they were merely fighting for a place in the feudal hierarchy. As we shall see, this was true only in the sense that they made use of the only means at their disposal to free themselves from burdensome restrictions by cloaking their schemes under feudal terms such as declaring themselves "collective seigniories," whereas in reality their one and only aim was the independence which would insure unrestricted opportunity for trade.

The revival of urban life during the eleventh century was due to the revival of trade which occurred during the same period. The causes of the latter have been admirably treated by Henri Pirenne in his *Medieval Cities*, Chapter IV, "The Revival of Commerce." Here it will suffice to note that, when trade revived and merchants began to organize into bands and to travel, it was but natural that they should be scattered to centers which had originally been chosen because of their location on road or river, such as the fortified enclosures which had once been flourishing Roman cities, or the newer burgs of powerful feudal nobles, or monastic establishments. There they found the moral protection of established order and authority, as well as the material protection of strong walls. These favorable conditions induced many merchants to settle down among the laborers or craftsmen of the old towns, or to build a warehouse or *portus* beside the burg of some noble or monastery, and there develop

a permanent trade. In time more merchants were attracted to these localities until gradually the available space within the old towns was occupied, and it was necessary to build new enclosures or fauburgs (*forisburgus*) beyond the walls. The *portus* and the fauburg continued to grow until in many places they completely surrounded the old town or fortress. It was in these new settlements, inhabited by professional merchants who were entirely devoted to trade, that the first disturbances arose which later developed into the communal insurrections.

It is not surprising that conflicts should have arisen between the new merchant class, with their commercial and industrial interests, and the bishop or count whose rights and jurisdiction had hitherto been acknowledged by all the inhabitants. As the number of merchants increased and their trade developed, the order and protection which at first had attracted them became more of a burden than a help. They were hampered by taxes and feudal obligations which the lords had always demanded of their subjects, but which were incompatible with the freedom necessary for trade. As a result the new inhabitants made demands which seemed revolutionary to the lords who had permitted these strangers to settle on their lands. They felt they had a perfect right to tax and legislate for those whom they and their predecessors had enabled to attain a certain degree of economic prosperity.

The characteristics which stand out above all others among the inhabitants of the new fauburgs were: the spirit of enterprise in developing the beginnings of industry and commerce; complete absorption in commercial activities; a spirit of rebellion against feudal restrictions on trade; a desire for civil liberty in order to secure commercial freedom by a new *jus mercatorum*. These characteristics were so revolutionary at the time that they gave rise to several problems which demanded an immediate solution.

The first problem confronting the new merchant class was the fact that they had to come to terms with the owners of the soil on which they were living. Sometimes this owner was a bishop, sometimes a monastery, or sometimes a count. The land had until recently been used solely for agriculture, and it took some time for the owners to perceive the profit they could make by turning it over to a group whose occupation they distrusted and despised. Conflicts inevitably arose, as the merchants could not brook the delay and confusion resulting from feudal procedure.

Another problem which the merchants had to solve was the multiplicity of jurisdictions to which they were subject. The land on which their warehouses were built was often owned by several proprietors. Each proprietor had his own court which handled all cases regarding land-tenure, debts or criminal matters on his property. As part of the land on which the merchants were living might be owned by a bishop, part by a nobleman, and another part by the local monastery, the burghers were frequently subject to several tribunals. This prevented uniform laws and often resulted in conflicting regulations. The situation was further complicated by the fact that the different tribunals were not all located in the old burg or fortress close at hand. The owner may have changed his residence, and hence it was necessary to travel a long distance to

plead before his court. Thus the townspeople were subjected to constant petty annoyances which hampered trade. It was these restrictions on their economic liberty which led the burghers to demand freedom from feudal control.

As the populations of towns increased during the eleventh century, the aims of two opposite factions became more clearly marked. The towns really consisted of two distinct populations: the old feudal group within the confines of the original burg or fortress, and the new merchant class dwelling in the *portus* or *fauburg*. The old feudal traditions, ideas and interests were opposed by the new aspirations and needs of the merchants. The population of the original burg, collected within the ancient walls, remained stationary or decreased, while the population of the surrounding suburb increased, so that in time a new city wall was built to inclose the whole area of the new and enlarged town. The increase in numbers and in wealth enabled the merchants in the new suburbs to make demands on the ancient nobility.

The chief demands of the new middle class were: personal liberty, or the right of acting independently of feudal restrictions; a special tribunal, by which the multiplicity of conflicting jurisdictions could be eliminated; a new penal code, which would guarantee the "peace" of the city. "What they wanted, in fine," says Pirenne, "was a more or less extensive degree of political autonomy and local self-government." These demands were first voiced during the eleventh century, and continued until most of them had been granted in the form of town charters in the course of the twelfth century. This process has become known as the communal movement. We shall discuss it in the sequel.

As communal charters enabled the towns that had obtained them to act in the capacity of "collective seigniories," certain historians have formulated a theory which presents the communes, not as anti-feudal, but as members of the feudal hierarchy. As has already been noted, this was true only in the sense that the townsmen made use of feudal terms to cloak their schemes in order to obtain their independence of feudal restrictions so that they might engage in trade. The communal movement was growing at the very time when feudalism was falling to pieces, and was in fact one of the chief causes that contributed to its decline. By the end of the twelfth century merely the external forms of feudalism remained in most places, while during the same period the communes were in their most flourishing condition.

Carl Stephenson's monograph, *Borough and Town: A Study of Urban Origins in England* (Cambridge, Mass., 1933), has two introductory chapters and an appendix in which he devotes considerable attention to the feudal theory of the communes. He begins his discussion of the subject in Chapter I, "The Medieval Town in Historical Literature," where he refers to the work of A. Thierry, *Considérations sur l'Histoire de France* (Paris, 1850), which stressed the revolutionary character of the communes as a sworn association. He shows how Thierry's views were adopted with some modifications by A. Luchaire in his two works, *Les Communes Françaises* (Paris, 1890) and *Manuel des Institutions Françaises* (Paris, 1892), in which the communes were looked upon as self-

governing towns. In this connection he mentions that Luchaire adopted the theory earlier formulated by A. Giry that the commune was a member of the feudal hierarchy, a "collective seigniority."

In Chapter II, "Urban Liberties on the Continent," Stephenson gives the following definitions and explanations of the word commune:

Like the other famous term *universitas*, the Latin equivalent of the English "commune" bore two sets of interpretations: one general and the other specific. On the one hand, *communa*, *communio*, and *communio* were often interchangeable with *communitas*. On the other hand, from the eleventh century onward, the same words were increasingly given the special meaning, more or less sinister, of a sworn association. . . .

. . . by the later twelfth century, the word commune had acquired still another meaning, that of a self-governing town; and as such many a commune was created out-of-hand by a foundation charter. But even in this respect there was no uniformity. Scores of towns secured the widest municipal privileges through the liberality, indifference, or powerlessness of their rulers, and in them the sworn association, if it existed at all, played a minor role. Not infrequently towns that from the outset had come to be styled communes enjoyed less political authority than others which had never borne that name. As has been seen, the definition of commune by Giry and Luchaire had only the slightest basis in fact, and its rise of the French towns is regarded as primarily a "communal application has resulted in much confusion. For so long as the revolution," and this is interpreted in terms of legalistic feudalism, more fundamental aspects of social development are inevitably obscured.

In Appendix I, "Giry and Luchaire on the Commune," the origin and development of the feudal theory are discussed at greater length. Stephenson begins by restating that "although the feudal theory of the commune has chiefly owed its popularity to the works of Luchaire, its formulation was largely due to Giry." In his famous monograph *Histoire de la Ville de Saint-Omer* (Paris, 1877) Giry stated that "all the Flemish towns were in some fashion members of the feudal hierarchy and conducted themselves like vassals toward their count." Later in his work *Les Etablissements de Rouen* (Paris, 1883) Giry professed to have discovered what seemed to him a more distinctive type of commune.

The sworn communes of Normandy did not, like many in Northern France, arise from insurrectionary organizations. In Normandy the communal oath was rather an oath of vassalage than of association. The townsmen's status was created by the king, who thereby endowed it with the rights and obligations of a vassal. It was therefore a mistake to consider the communal revolution essentially an anti-feudal movement. Although communes often fought against their lords, they did not fight against feudalism as a system: rather they fought to enter the feudal hierarchy as themselves *véritables seigneuries*.

Giry expressed the opinion that these conclusions, though drawn for Normandy, might also be valid elsewhere, but he did not develop this point any further. In the meantime Luchaire had been writing his *Histoire des Institutions Monarchiques* (Paris, 1883) which was published shortly after the appearance of Giry's work on Rouen. Luchaire cited Giry's monograph with approval and adopted his theory concerning the peculiar character of the Norman communes. He himself used a similar line of argument to explain Louis VI's charter to Mante, but made no attempt to explain all communal relationships in terms of technical feudalism.

Seven years later Luchaire published his famous *Les Communes Françaises à l'Époque des Capétiens Directs* (Paris, 1890). In the concluding chapter of Book I he elaborated all the ideas that have since become so famous: the commune was a *seigneurie collective populaire*, bound

by all the obligations of a vassal; it was subject to feudal aids on the three fixed occasions; it rendered military service through its militia. These were practically the same points as had been emphasized earlier by Giry; but Luchaire applied them, not to the peculiar communes of Normandy, but to communes in general. As proofs he cited half a dozen documents of the later thirteenth century, mostly collected by Giry, and several articles from the Saint-Omer charter.

About the same time Giry wrote an article on the medieval communes for *La Grande Encyclopédie*, citing Luchaire's recent book and expressing the same views: the commune was a *seigneurie*, holding chartered privileges in return for homage, aids, etc. This *seigneurie* was not the military establishment of Norman custom, but the old familiar commune based on the sworn association. Thus formulated the theory was reaffirmed by both writers. Luchaire developed it in a chapter of his well-known *Manuel des Institutions Françaises* (Paris, 1892), and Giry stated it with great emphasis in the second volume of Lavis and Rambaud's *Histoire Générale* (Paris, 1893). This study has been translated into English by F. G. Bates and P. E. Tittsworth under the title *Emancipation of the Medieval Towns* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1907). The same theory appears in Joan Evans' *Life in Mediaeval France* (Oxford University Press, 1925), Chapter III, "Town Life," and in Vol. V of the *Cambridge Medieval History* (1926), Chapter XIX, "The Communal Movement Especially in France," by Eleanor C. Lodge, M. A.

Thus the theory which originally had been formulated by Giry to distinguish the Norman communes from the rest was applied by Luchaire to the latter rather than to the former, and as such was eventually adopted by Giry himself. From the writings of these two authors it has made its way into the works of English historians. The whole theory seems to have been based on conjecture rather than on evidence, since the documents cited by both originators were extremely inadequate. Professor Stephenson concludes his analysis by saying:

The feudal theory of the commune is condemned, not only by its incompatibility with any general explanation of municipal development throughout western Europe, but by its own inherent weakness. It has never rested upon more than a certain plausibility, which on careful analysis proves to have been an illusion.

As a means to arouse interest and promote outside reading among high school students, especially of the freshmen and sophomore years, Miss Roy ("Notebooks as Projects in a History Course," *Social Studies*, April, 1937) suggests the use of notebooks which shall resemble some type of modern publication, *e. g.*, a souvenir program of the Olympic Games or a medieval tournament, a guide book for some city, a Who's Who, a newspaper, a manual of information for use of Crusaders. She gives full outlines for some of these projects, indicating what ought to be included, and then listing references where material for each point can be found. Outside reading, she feels, when assigned in this way will not be a dull task. The fact that the pupils are producing something of their own will make for interest and enthusiasm and confidence.

Americana

Lawrence J. Kenny
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WE are in an Iron Age, and consequently Minnesota, which has "produced more iron than any other district in the world," is sitting just now on top of the world. As her furnaces are pouring out their shining ingots, so her University is sending forth and foundering into lasting shape the precious facts of her brilliant genesis. Here are just a few, five volumes, that have recently come from the press.

If the authors had agreed to occupy separate fields, to present Minnesota from altogether different viewpoints, they could scarcely have succeeded in doing that thing better. Yet they seem to be all alike in one essential feature. There are now in Minnesota at least half a million Catholics, more than the membership of any other denomination, yet in no one of the five volumes do we find the slightest suggestion that there is a Catholic at present in that great state.

What then should be the reaction of a Catholic educational institution, or individual, to such an exhibition? What moral note should be attached to these volumes? Precisely the same as is applied to the production of iron. Iron may be turned to frightfully destructive purposes as in war; or, on the other hand, it may serve a thousand human comforts. But as iron, without flaw, is more useful than gold, so the volumes before us, which are almost innocent of any intrinsic moral quality, deserve on the score of their many excellences a high appreciation.

Minnesota Grows Up begins badly in the bog of archaeology, but happily reaches the solid soil of history quickly, and it then tells the entire story of Minnesota down to date in a racing narrative of sustained merriment. It is a child's book, but grandfather will recognize that it is the output of genius, that is, of infinite pains. It deals with things, not men; but they are actually made interesting.

Following the Prairie Frontier is interesting, too, thrillingly so. Here we have a series of stories that are chiefly character sketches of recent frontiersmen, and of the several species of human varments that preyed upon the honest pioneer. The last and best story takes us out of Minnesota. It is the account of the opening of the Cherokee Strip of Oklahoma in 1893.

Tales of the Northwest offers a double treat. The introduction by Professor Flanagan is a charming criticism

of the *Tales*. The reader may review all his "Courses in English" as it is now taught, while gently perusing these pages. Every cliché and tool of modern requirement is here presented as dextrously as the circus-man demonstrates his sixteen knives in his juggling feat. It is a neat piece of work. Snelling, the author, was the son of the Colonel after whom Fort Snelling was named. More than a century ago, he spent seven years of his youth among the Red Men of Minnesota and the adjacent territory. The *Tales* show a penetration of Indian psychology not to be found elsewhere in all literature, and on that score the little volume, first printed in Boston in 1830, and now long forgotten, is re-edited. The scene of the first Tale is laid at Prairie du Chien, and there will be an added interest to many of our readers in the fact that all the others are located in well-known haunts of today.

Bishop Whipple's Southern Diary is another restoration. It is a reproduction of a blank book that young Henry Benjamin Whipple, the subsequent bishop, used to jot down his observations during a health-seeking trip through Florida and the Gulf States, then up the Mississippi as far as St. Louis, then east as far as Baltimore. The account is simple and honest. The book, something like a de luxe edition, will no doubt be highly prized by the large numbers who in later days grew to honor and love the first Episcopal prelate of the Northwest, whose very successful labors in behalf of the aborigines won him the title of "The Apostle of the Indians." The editor says he was an apostle like Elliott. That is very correct; both were apostles *in absentia*. Unlike DeSmet or others to whom Catholics apply the term, they never endured the hardships of a winter season in a wigwam; yet it must be confessed that for men burdened with family cares, they did admirable work. In St. Louis, the future bishop, paid particular attention to the Old, then new, Cathedral, of which the book carries a steel engraving. He mentions "St. Louis University under the Jesuits" and refers to the mob that "but a few weeks since came near destroying the medical college" of the University. He speaks well of Catholic groups wherever he meets them, but thinks they are good despite their corrupt religion. The editor indicates that association later with Archbishop Ireland civilized the bishop in this regard.

The Religious Aspect of Swedish Immigration is the only work among these Minnesota publications that is a really historical treatise; all the others are ancillary in their make up. Professor Stephenson would seem in this ponderous and well documented tome to have utterly exhausted his subject. It is incredible that any one else will ever attempt to improve upon his ample investigation. Every requirement of the canons of scholarship seems rigorously complied with. Yet the complete absence of a suggestion that there is a Catholic, just one, anywhere in contact with a present-day Swede in America or in the old world proposes a problem. The motive, no doubt good, for so strange a suppression is a mystery.

1. *Minnesota Grows Up*, by Clara S. Painter and Anna Brezler. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis. pp. 144. \$1.75.
2. *Following the Prairie Frontier*, by Seth K. Humphrey. U. of Minn. pp. 265. \$2.50.
3. *Tales of the Northwest*, by William Joseph Snelling, re-edited by John T. Flanagan. U. of Minn. pp. 254. \$3.50.
4. *Bishop Whipple's Southern Diary, 1843-1844*. Edited by Lester B. Shippee. U. of Minn. pp. 207. \$3.50.
5. *The Religious Aspect of Swedish Immigration*, by George M. Stephenson. U. of Minn. pp. 542. \$4.50.
6. *Western Lands and The American Revolution*, by Thomas Perkins Abernathy. D. Appleton-Century Company. pp. XVI + 413.
7. *Spanish Folk-tales From New Mexico*, by José Manuel Espinosa. American Folk-lore Society. New York. 1937. pp. XIX + 222.

Western Lands and the American Revolution, published for the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences of the University of Virginia as Monograph No. 25, is another exhaustive study of the matter of its title. The rivalry of companies and individuals for the ownership of the millions of acres in the old Northwest Territory before, during and after the War for American Independence is here portrayed in accurate detail. The constitutional features of national possession of these lands were pointed out in broad outlines in 1885 by W. B. Adams in *Maryland's Influence*. He viewed the scene as from a mountain top with something of majestic scope. The present volume descends into the plain. The author seems to be lost at times among the weeds. The closer perspective destroys the beauty. The Red Men are not the only thieves whose lairs are here uncovered. Robert Morris and Silas Deane and other once-honored names are here sent to Sheol, even "honest Ben Franklin's" account books are somewhat indicative of grafting on a comparatively small scale. The author consoles us in his Retrospect

with the small catalogue: The Revolution produced . . . also a John Adams and a George Washington. We regret that he does not add at least one more name, that of Daniel Carroll, brother of the Archbishop, who, after Washington, is the hero of W. B. Adams's recital.

Unlike any of the foregoing studies, but a sizable contribution to a better understanding of the Southwest is Dr. Espinosa's collection of Spanish folk-tales. The stories, 114 in number, were written down as recounted by forty-three informants, ranging in age from twelve to one hundred years. They were then analyzed, classified, and traced to earlier versions current in Europe. A large majority of them were found in almost identical form in the north-central section of Old Spain. The fact that after three centuries and more the Indian influence is so nearly negligible argues for the strength of the Spanish tradition in the Southwest. The scholarship of Dr. Espinosa and the attractive book-making of the American Folk-lore Society have produced a volume that makes pleasant reading.

A Disillusioned Liberal

(Continued from page twenty-four)

more power to the States, and less authority to the Federal government. As the states developed, and continued to assume more and more power, he believed that the Federal government would entirely disappear, and the Union would break up into its component independent and sovereign states.¹⁶ Tocqueville might have been right if the issue of the Civil War has been a different one.

The Comte argues against the popular election of powerful officers of the state on the ground that this encourages ambition and forceful seizure of power. However, he finds that there is little danger of this in the United States, since the President possesses so little power!¹⁷ His analysis seems to be correct as regards the Latin American republics. He also deplores the interregnum which occurs around election time destroying efficient government and creating instability. He opposes the idea of reelection as an encouragement to intrigue and corruption in office.

The French commentator argues that the federal system combines the freedom and political vitality found in small, compact states, with the power and strength of large states. "The union is happy and free as a little nation, and respected as a great one."¹⁸ Following Montesquieu, the Comte holds that true democracy can exist only in small local political units. He admits that complexity and a doubtful division of power are defects inherent in the federal system. The people must have a strong and vital political sense and long practice in order to operate such a government properly and efficiently. We could use a little more of this political sense in the United States at times, although we have avoided the comic opera type of government sometimes found in nations which have copied our check and balance system.

But Tocqueville conceded several defects in the operation of democracy in America. He concludes that these are accidental and may be removed. Announcing that "the political parties I style great are those which cling to principles rather than to their consequences,"¹⁹ he admits that he can find no such party organizations in the United States, and deplores the political opportunism prevalent in 1835. Would he be similarly disappointed today?

Tocqueville argued that liberty of the press might spread undesirable ideas, since people are very easily influenced by what they read in print. At the same time he denounced even the slightest censorship as an absurdity in a nation where the sovereignty of the people reigns supreme.²⁰ It is interesting to note that Tocqueville found the press in America not so dangerous as an agency of propaganda because the many independent papers largely neutralizes one another in their rivalry. Probably he would decry the power of the vast newspaper syndicates of our day. "It is a difficult question," he comments, "to decide whether an aristocracy or a democracy governs the best. But it is certain that democracy annoys one part of the community, and that aristocracy oppresses another."²¹ He regarded the cost of the elimination of oppression a small one.

Tocqueville discovered that democracy in operation differs from democracy in theory in that rarely indeed do the people place the more talented in charge of their affairs. The Comte thought this was due primarily to the democratic passion for equality which is never entirely satisfied. The masses have a deep seated distrust of the talented man and for the highest classes of society generally, and therefore elect men of their own calibre to office.²² No government officer should be expected to serve without adequate pay, for, either the rich will take

¹⁶ *op. cit.*, 110 et seq. for his discussion of the Federal government of the United States.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, 127.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, 164. Cf. 155 et seq. for a full discussion of the relative advantages of the federal system.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, 175.

²⁰ *ibid.*, 181-188.

²¹ *ibid.*, 190.

²² *ibid.*, 202-203.

these positions and an aristocracy will be created, or the poor will take them for the purposes of corruption.²³ Yet these defects of democracy in operation, are secondary in importance to the grandeur of the movement as a whole. Later, he changed his mind.

The Comte regarded as democracy's greatest gain the tendency of the laws to promote the benefit of the majority rather than a minority. He also noted that democracy encourages respect for the rights of others. To Tocqueville, the reason for this lies in the fact that democracy in America has made the people intensely interested in their government. This is essential to the preservation of good government under a democratic system; as soon as apathy replaces interest, a government is doomed to failure.²⁴ No one can doubt the validity of this argument.

Following upon his great praise of democracy, Tocqueville's criticism of majority rule in the United States seems rather inconsistent. Nevertheless, it is a truly liberal criticism. The Comte declares that "the essence of democratic government consists in the absolute sovereignty of the majority,"²⁵ and finds that in the United States the doctrine that the king can do no wrong is replaced by the dogma that the majority can do no wrong. In a typically liberal spirit, he would check this absolute control which he regards as a menace to liberty in the United States. Tocqueville was therefore keen sighted enough to perceive that absolute democracy is not the ideal type of government from the liberal point of view. The individual exchanges the despotism of a single ruler for the despotism of the majority which may be more harsh than that of a king because it is often more blind and unreasonable.

Tocqueville remarks: "I hold it to be an impious and detestable maxim that, politically speaking, the people have a right to do anything; and yet I do assert that all authority originates in the will of the majority."²⁶ Here the Comte finds himself face to face with the root political problem. His allocation of the origin of all authority in a majority of the people leads logically to despotism of the majority and mob rule. But Tocqueville like other liberals shrinks from this monster. His answer to the difficulty is vague. He says that one may refuse to obey the law, but in so doing one does not contest the fundamental right of the majority to command the obedience of the individual, but merely appeals from the sovereignty of the people to the sovereignty of mankind.²⁷

Of course it would not be in accordance with nineteenth century liberal principles to turn back to the wisdom of the great political philosophers who allocated political authority in God, since that authority is an exigency of created human society. A political society or state is a providential development, and possesses divinely granted political authority. The members of that political society determine the constitution and organization of government they shall have to exercise that authority. They may decide to employ the decision of the

majority secured under democratic forms as a convenient method of procedure in determining the policies of the state. But this does not mean majority rule in the sense that the majority merely because it is a majority has the right arbitrarily to impose its will upon a minority. This may be termed democratically controlled government, but certainly it is not democracy in the sense of mass rule.

Tocqueville indeed perceived the difficulties inherent in arbitrary rule and deplored their existence in the United States, but he failed to discover the solution to the problem. His appeal to the sovereignty of mankind is a typically liberal evasion of the problem, for he does not explain what this sovereignty is or how it can be determined. We may all agree with Tocqueville's dictum that "unlimited power is in itself a bad and dangerous thing."²⁸

A century ago the Comte remarked: "I know of no country in which there is so little independency of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America."²⁹ This he found was due to the social ostracism which American public opinion inflicts upon the person who does not conform to popular ideas. It is interesting to find that Tocqueville noted this slavish subservience to popular opinion existing in America a century ago.

Probably he would not be surprised today to find this tendency to mass uniformity more marked today in our age of teachers' oaths, canned entertainment, canned food and canned ideas. We wonder if the Comte would be amused at our attempts to escape through indulging our "joining" propensities. Tocqueville notes that the man who conforms to mass standards is the successful American politician, and finds that this popular muffling of individualism accounts for the small number of distinguished men to be found in public life in the United States. He contends that this condition may be mitigated only through decentralisation of power. A further centralisation of authority tends to make majority despotism even more obnoxious, and will create an even greater insistence upon a standardized man. This observation is a rather acute one; a glance at the history of the United States in the century since de Tocqueville wrote suffices to verify the Comte's analysis.

Tocqueville notes that democracy in America has been preserved and advanced through lack of danger of attack by a strong foreign power, as well as through the levelling influence of the frontier, of the American laws of inheritance and of the manners and customs of the people. Religion and the existence of a virile local political power are the two safeguards against the tyranny of the majority.³⁰ Were he to observe today, this liberal would probably conclude that, with religion and local political power becoming less and less important, this type of tyranny is advancing.

In spite of all the faults which democracy in operation manifests, Tocqueville concludes:

But I am of the opinion that, if we do not succeed in gradually introducing democratic institutions into France, if we despair of imparting to all the citizens those ideas and sentiments which first prepare them for freedom, and afterwards allow them to enjoy it, . . . if the peaceful dominion of the majority be not

²³ *ibid.*, 209-210.

²⁴ *ibid.*, 240-257 *passim*.

²⁵ *ibid.*, 258.

²⁶ *ibid.*, 263.

²⁷ *ibid.*, 263-266.

²⁸ *ibid.*, 264.

²⁹ *ibid.*, 267.

³⁰ *ibid.*, 292-336 *passim*.

founded amongst us in time, we shall sooner or later fall under the unlimited authority of a single man.³¹ The Comte would prefer democracy with all its faults to the latter alternative. This prediction seems to have been realized in his bitter experience in the revolution of 1848.

At that time Tocqueville was given a more intimate view of mass democracy in action. Like many nine-

³¹ *ibid.*, 336.

teenth century liberals, democrats in theory, he turned away in horror when European democracy went into practical action, and carried to their logical conclusions the principles he had enunciated. Enthusiast for democracy in 1839, he became a bitter critic of French democracy in 1850. A century has passed since Tocqueville made his observations on democracy in America. We may still turn to them for instruction.

Book Reviews

A History of Militarism: Romance and Realities of a Profession, by Alfred Vagts. New York. W. W. Norton & Company. pp. ix + 510. \$4.75.

The history of Militarism is not the history of war. Either may exist without the other. Wars must be fought in a "military way . . . by a primary concentration of men and materials on the winning of specific objectives of power with the utmost efficiency, that is, with the least expenditure of blood and treasure." For Militarism actual fighting is an unwanted unavoidable evil; the mere threat of war serves quite as well. This colossal incubus on modern society "presents a vast array of customs, interests, prestige, actions and thought associated with armies and wars and yet transcending true military purposes. . . . It may hamper and defeat the purposes of the military way. . . . It may permeate all society and become dominant over all industry and arts . . . militarism displays the qualities of caste and cult."

This book comes very near to being what we call "contemporary history." Fully two-thirds of it deals with the World War and its aftermath. The theme is important, and the story should be interesting. The reviewer is still wondering why he should have found it a bit tedious. The author has read deeply in his subject, and employs a wealth of direct quotations. Our disagreement with him is limited to minor points. It is a mark of the downhill "progress" of which we are the helpless victims, that this history should begin with the picturesque, manly knight of medieval times and end in the prosaic, mechanized, totalitarian era which smothers the soul of man. "The Peace of Münster wiped out the feudal system with its small impermanent bodies of individualistic warriors; upon the vacated arena were built up the standing armies" of strong monarchs, for the most part under a military caste. The French Revolution gave us the "nation in arms." The Napoleonic deluge merely foreshadowed the whirlpool of 1914. We are now faced with "the Society-in-Arms, regimented down to the very infants, . . . economically and mentally mobilized, forever standing in readiness for the 'total war'." R. CORRIGAN.

The Federal Union, A History of the United States to 1865, by John D. Hicks. Houghton Mifflin. Boston. 1937. pp. xvii + 734. \$3.50.

Economic History of the South, by Emory Q. Hawk, Ph. D. Prentice-Hall. New York. 1934. pp. xiv + 546. \$3.50.

The Federal Union is a new text-book in American History covering the period from the American Revolution to the end of the Civil War. It is the result of Professor Hick's eighteen years' teaching experience at Wisconsin University. The main feature of this work is its neat, compact and clear presentation. It possesses a smoothness and balance that can only be explained by the author's breadth of vision and high quality of scholarship. In a survey history of this type there are some evident omissions. We would call the author's attention to two: Spanish colonization in the present boundaries of the United States and the missionary program in the West especially that of the Catholic Church. When non-Catholic historians become more familiar with the mass of research Catholic students are doing such blatant oversights will be out of order. More formidable critics, especially zealots of the new simplified texts, may find fault with the work as a text-book for its lack of pedagogical ruffles, but those of the old school feel that such aids are the part of a good teacher. Any criticism of this work can hardly discredit the good name of the author. The bibliography and index are very complete, and for class-room use the book is highly recommended.

In 1904 Frederick Jackson Turner made a plea for a better treatment of "the whole industrial and social history of the South."

Professor Hawk's volume is a belated reply to this request and the reader is left to judge to what extent he has succeeded. From the collective method of agriculture of Sir Walter Raleigh in 1585 to the fiscal systems of the present Southern States, the author has run the whole gamut of agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic vicissitudes. Except for official records, consulted for the numerous statistical tables, and the examination of a few manuscript sources, this able synthesis lays no claim to originality. The reader is relieved of a good deal of drudgery by the author's careful separation of the many factors that enter into the economic life of any people. First there is presented a chronological division into three main epochs: the colonial South from its beginnings to 1783, the ante-bellum South 1783 to 1860, and the South after 1880. The subdivisions under each of these three periods are: Land and Population, Agriculture, Industry, Transportation and Finance. Since most of the material is of a factual character, there is little need for interpretations; hence any partisan view is totally out of the question. Each chapter is supplemented by a critical bibliography of interest to the research student. GEORGE McHUGH.

A History of American Political Thought from the Civil War to the World War, by Edward R. Lewis. Macmillan Co. New York. 1937. pp. x + 566. \$5.00.

The ebb and flow of American political life during the half century after the Civil War is sketched in this new volume of Professor Lewis. The author chose the topical method and so ranges over a wide variety of subjects and writers. Brownson, Mulford, Wilson, Laski and Beard, Grangerism, Greenbackism, Populism and other planned reforms have their place in this work. Wide research is evident on nearly every page, and the care taken in writing makes reading both interesting and profitable.

Professor Lewis has been careful not only to present but to analyze and criticize the men and movements he selected. Few will disagree with his selections but his criticisms will arouse some comment. For he seems to lack a definite norm from which to judge the different philosophies he discusses. While he can point out the weaknesses in doctrines and systems, still he is wont to dismiss them with trite phrases or leave them without further comment. Thus in criticizing those who would hold a theory of divine origin of power, yet reject the divine origin thesis of James I, he writes: "But, of course, religious faith can never be an explanation of political power: the answer cannot be so subjective." Again he tells us, "all a priori systems, after all, are based on the sense of right and wrong of the man who formulates the system." This does not mean that all his criticism is faulty. Much is objective and well handled. The teaching of the economic school is shown to be inadequate, and the shortcomings of the utilitarians and hedonists are clearly portrayed. The scope of the book is so broad and the treatment of subjects so synoptic that the more important contributors to our political life are not made to stand out from the minor ones. Still the volume will prove helpful to those who have done work in this field or are under capable guides. A bibliography at the end of each chapter and a complete index enhance the usefulness of the book.

BRIAN A. McGRATH.

Poor-Relief in the Sixteenth Century, by Carl R. Steinbicker. Washington. Catholic University. 1937. pp. xxxi + 272.

Poor relief is now the business of the state, supplemented by the Church or churches and by private philanthropy. Five hundred years ago, it was cared for almost exclusively by the Church. The civil power is becoming more and more paternalistic, efficient, business-like. The maternal solicitude of the Church remains essentially unchanged, but she disposes less and less of the means

to remedy temporal needs. Humanitarian philanthropy has to a degree supplanted Christian charity. The change is rooted in the religious upheaval of the sixteenth century. And the process by which it was effected is called secularization.

Secularization was "the outright theft of Church property," which enriched the state and, incidentally, the anti-Catholic elements in society. It was also "the process of transferring to lay States the direction and control of numerous agencies of charity and poor-relief, which had previously been under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Church." Here we have one of the most characteristic features of the modern world. Dr. Steinbicker in the dissertation under review throws much light on the factors which brought about this change.

Whatever one thinks about the modern method and the modern spirit, their historical origins make an interesting chapter. We single out a few pertinent facts. "The Reformation created neither the communal nor the governmental system of poor-relief." Both had developed earlier "under strictly Catholic auspices." The contribution of Luther in particular was "exclusively negative" in that it "removed the props of the old ecclesiastical system." It wrought much havoc; it was not beneficial, except perhaps insofar as it "paved the way" for later, much later, state activity. The effect of the Calvinistic ethic was to make the English "pauperism established by law" an unbearable condition. The Work Houses and the whipping of "sturdy beggars," however effective in discouraging poverty, were scarcely Christian in their inspiration. But the disruption of Christendom and the divorce of the state from religion are only a part of the story of the sixteenth century. Catholics, long neglectful of their duty to the poor, put on new life in the Catholic Reformation. Pius XI, following Leo XIII, can still insist that the solution of the social question demands cooperation between Church and state.

R. CORRIGAN.

A History of Catholic Education in the United States, by the Very Rev. J. A. Burns, C. S. C., and Bernard J. Kohlbrener. Benziger Bros. 1937. pp. xi + 295. \$3.20.

The volume under review, as its sub-title indicates, is a text-book for Normal Schools and Teachers' Colleges. It can be divided roughly into two parts: the first presents a sketchy history of Catholic education from its beginnings in the United States to 1930, largely adapted from Father Burns' two bulky volumes published in 1908 and 1912, respectively. Mr. Kohlbrener has summed up and supplemented these works in less than 300 pages so that there results a surprisingly brief, but dove-tailed account of Catholic educational activity from the epoch of the Spanish Franciscan Friars in Florida to the establishment and development of Catholic professional and graduate schools throughout the whole country.

The continuity of American Catholic education with the European tradition traced back to the first great Christian Teacher is stressed in the opening chapter. A chapter on Catholic education and the state opens the second part, and presents a glimpse of the more famous controversies over the rights of parent and state. At the end of the discussion the reader is left in no doubt as to the advantages accruing from the divorce of Catholic education in the United States from government control. The remaining three chapters describe the evolution of the present-day curricula and organization in parochial and high schools, in colleges and universities. Of no little importance is the fact that Catholic educational endeavor is not viewed as an isolated unit, but is seen in its relations to the progress of American society and the development of the non-Catholic educational program.

Despite its encyclopedic tone, the volume will be well received by both students and teachers. Within a few months it has proved its popularity by the demand for a second edition. Each chapter is supplemented by several key questions and exercises to aid the teacher. Topics for Investigation and Report, and Selected Readings are added for student and teacher alike. These supplements indicate the vast field that lies open for the investigator. They also show how little has been written until very recently on the indispensable part Catholic education has played in the total educational development of the United States. Until time and resources render a more thorough study possible, Catholic educators must be content with the present work despite its limitations. It is not surprising that in this detailed study a few slips should escape the proof-reader's eye. The reviewer trusts that it is with a token of modesty rather than of apology that the authors write in the preface: "Until more records and sources are carefully studied there cannot be written a wholly satisfactory general history of Catholic education."

GEORGE McHUGH.

High Points of Medieval Culture, by James J. Walsh. Bruce Publishing Company. Milwaukee. 1937. pp. 274. \$2.75.

This book, concerned with Christendom from 500 to 1500, was written for the layman. Giving, as its title indicates, the better side of medieval life, it will help to counteract the unfavorable picture in the minds of those who are but slightly conversant with the field. A very interesting and instructive practice of Dr. Walsh is his comparing of medieval with modern customs and institutions. An especially fine chapter in this regard is the one on pedagogics, in which he shows that the so-called modern educational theories were well known in the Ages of Faith.

The historian, however, has three misgivings. The first is that the author gives only one side of the picture; "With the shadows and weaknesses, he is not concerned." Secondly, he does not indicate the source of his quotations. Thirdly, he makes many statements that cannot be substantiated. We might overlook the first defect, in view of the warning sounded in the preface; but we cannot neglect the other two. Dr. Walsh usually gives the title and author of the book which he quotes, but one does not find a properly indicated footnote before page forty-eight, though antecedent pages are replete with quotations. He makes broad statements with no reference at all. Not only does he not give his sources, but in many instances I scarcely think he would find authorities to agree with him. To list some statements of this nature: Gregory VII was a monk at Cluny (page 57); Peter the Venerable had 2000 houses of the order under his obedience (page 58); there were no less than thirty-five English monasteries affiliated with Cluny at the time of the dissolution under Henry VIII (page 58). A medieval historian would highly appreciate evidence for these statements.

Some of the chapters form excellent and instructive essays, complete in themselves, for instance the one on the monastic school at Bec. For the layman who would not recognize or remember minor mistakes such as I have instanced, this book would be an excellent introduction to the culture of the Middle Ages. The numerous quotations, from secondary works, manifest Dr. Walsh's acquaintance with the literature of the medieval period. The fine style makes the book more interesting than most histories.

W. B. FAHERTY.

The Physical Treatises of Pascal. Translated by I. H. B. and A. G. H. Spiers, with introduction and notes by Frederick Barry. New York. Columbia University Press. 1937. xxix + 181. \$3.25.

Blaise Pascal had one of the world's great minds. A short life and wretched health account for the fragmentary character of his productions, mere flashes of genius to excite the ecstatic enthusiasm of his biographers. A few brief treatises, his Provincial Letters and his *Pensées* have been sufficient to give him a high rating in the history of science, of French literature and of religion. Scientists may or may not be interested in his pioneer experiments, but the student of the "Intellectual Revolution" will welcome *The Physical Treatises of Pascal*. Here we have in English translation the lucid explanation of what every child knows about the weight of the surrounding atmosphere and the pressure of liquids. Three hundred years ago scholars were still explaining the efficiency of a pump in a thirty-foot well by Nature's "abhorrence of a vacuum." The historical source-book here presented belongs to the "Records of Civilization, . . . edited under the auspices of the Department of History, Columbia University." Its two hundred pages provide a fair picture of Pascal and his contemporaries at work.

The genius of Pascal showed itself in the field of mathematics and of the physical sciences, but it soared above them. M. Périer, who published his scientific works in 1663, wrote a preface which should not be skimmed through too hastily. It reveals a mentality that is anything but "modern." This editor tells us, it was Pascal's firm belief "that religion was the one worthy object of the thoughts of men, and that it was one of the proofs of the degradation into which they had fallen through sin that they could devote themselves ardently to those things which cannot contribute to their happiness. . . . All the sciences could not comfort them in the days of affliction, . . . though it might be of some advantage and an obligation of a sort to follow the general practice of inquiring into these subjects and ascertaining what might be said most reasonably and soundly concerning them, it was absolutely necessary to learn not to overrate them; and . . . it would be better not to know them at all . . . than to devote oneself to them as though they were great and lofty studies." Pascal never lost his sense of relative values.

R. CORRIGAN.